



## Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans, Updated and Revised Edition

*By Ronald Takaki*

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In an extraordinary blend of narrative history, personal recollection, & oral testimony, the author presents a sweeping history of Asian Americans. He writes of the Chinese who laid tracks for the transcontinental railroad, of plantation laborers in the canefields of Hawaii, of "picture brides" marrying strangers in the hope of becoming part of the American dream. He tells stories of Japanese Americans behind the barbed wire of U.S. internment camps during World War II, Hmong refugees tragically unable to adjust to Wisconsin's alien climate & culture, & Asian American students stigmatized by the stereotype of the "model minority." This is a powerful & moving work that will resonate for all Americans, who together make up a nation of immigrants from other shores.

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Chinese immigrants to the U.S. in the 19th century were transformed into outsiders by racism and economic exploitation. This pattern, Takaki shows, would be imposed on other Asian immigrant groups. Filipinos, condescended to as "little brown brothers" by whites in the Philippines, became targets of violent white backlash once they emigrated to the U.S.; Indians were feared and persecuted as labor competition; Japanese-Americans withdrew into self-contained communities. Takaki, descended from a Japanese-American family who labored on Hawaiian plantations, and now an ethnic studies professor at UC Berkeley, has written a vibrant, rich history that gives back a voice to countless "invisible Americans." His broad, multi-ethnic survey is peopled with real individuals, allowing us to experience their loneliness, separation from families, struggles for survival. Later chapters cover the internment of Japanese-Americans during WW II and the post-1965 "second wave" of Asian immigrants that included Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians. Photos.

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From Library Journal

This popular history of Asian Americans--Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Vietnamese, Filipinos, and Indians--based frequently on primary sources, shows how they have made their presence felt in America from the early 1800s. Their immigration has been marked by the cruelty of forced labor, poverty, and intense prejudice. Many had come searching for a better life after hearing tales of gold nuggets on city streets, money on trees, and the famed "gold mountain." Instead, they found the endless chopping of sugar cane, the sweat of laundries, the backache of building railroads. Later generations discovered the lack of opportunity despite prestigious university degrees. This is fascinating reading, highly recommended.

- *Kitty Chen Dean, Nassau Community Coll., Garden City, N.Y.*

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About the Author

My grandfather emigrated from Japan to work on the cane fields of Hawaii in 1886, and my mother was born on the Hawi Plantation. As a teenager growing up on Oahu, I was not academically inclined but was actually a surfer. During my senior year, I took a religion course taught by Dr. Shunji Nishi, a Japanese American with a Ph.D. I remember going home and asking my mother, who only had an eighth-grade education: "Mom, what's a Ph.D.?" She answered: "I don't know but he must be very smart." Dr. Nishi became a role model for me, and he arranged for me to attend the College of Wooster. There my fellow white students asked me questions like: "How long have you been in this county? Where did you learn to speak English?" They did not see me as a fellow American. I did not look white or European in ancestry. As a scholar, I have been seeking to write a more inclusive and hence more accurate history of Americans, Chicanos, Native Americans as well as certain European immigrant groups like the Irish and Jews. My scholarship seeks not to separate our diverse groups but to show how our experiences were different but they were not disparate. Multicultural history, as I write and present it, leads not to what Schlesinger calls the "disuniting of America" but rather to the re-uniting of America.

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Debra Sudduth:**

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**Erin Harmon:**

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**Toby Lowry:**

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